



CITY OF ATLANTA

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SHIRLEY FRANKLIN
MAYOR

February 3, 2005

Dear Community Partner:

Our City is on the move! People are moving back to the City rather than face long commutes from the suburbs. For decades, businesses and families have moved out of the City. Today, Atlanta is a city vibrant and energetically primed for economic prosperity. People and businesses are experiencing that excitement and coming back to the City.

We have come a long way in a short time. The budget for the first time in decades has been balanced for three consecutive years, our sewers are being repaired and the city's infrastructure capacity is expanding.

What's next? We have an action plan to ensure Atlanta WILL be the thriving core of the metropolitan area and the most successful city in the Southeast for decades to come.

Looking forward to Atlanta's future, the Atlanta Development Authority adopted ***The New Century Economic Development Plan*** this past December. Just as Atlanta is an ambitious city, this is an ambitious plan. It is not the *Atlanta way* to aim low. We aim high, and the targets in the economic development plan, aim high. It establishes clear and measurable goals in a wide range of areas. It will make sure we hold ourselves accountable for achieving our goals. The TOP 10 economic development initiatives in the plan are:

1. support growth of target industries;
2. create and grow business recruitment, retention, and expansion capabilities;
3. champion BeltLine and Downtown as major development projects;
4. increase economic vitality of underserved areas;
5. make it easier to develop in Atlanta;
6. increase affordable housing;
7. increase capital available for development and business growth;
8. make Atlanta one of America's safest cities;
9. collaborate to improve the graduation rates in Atlanta Public Schools, and
10. grow dedicated parks and green space.

The plan focuses on healthy neighborhoods, quality of life and economic opportunity for all Atlantans. By 2009, the goal is to add 2,000 new workforce-housing units each year so that our teachers, police officers, firefighters and support staff can afford to live near their jobs. We need to make it easier for developers to build housing in the City, which means changing our permitting processes. In the past, construction delays have driven up new home prices in our area. Everyone, who works hard and wants to own a home in the City, should have that opportunity. It is important that the right housing mix exists to satisfy this demand.

We must also grow jobs in the City, not just the quantity, but also the quality. We will focus on growing industries that matter most to Atlanta--those that are big and those that can prosper. We will add 60,000 new jobs by 2009 by supporting growth in four key industries: a) transportation and logistics; b) tourism and entertainment; c) health services, and d) colleges, universities and higher education. We also need to attract more capital for economic development so that we can promote job creation, entrepreneurship and small businesses. It is my intention to propose funding an Economic Development Fund of at least one percent of the General Fund with two-thirds of that going to job creation and one-third to entrepreneurship and small business.

We understand that safety is important to all Atlanta residents and visitors. We have a commitment from Atlanta police that we will diligently work to decrease crime by 50 percent in the next five years so that families and children will feel safe and secure.

A quality education is one path to economic success. We have some of the best colleges and universities in the world in our own backyard. Our children have a wonderful opportunity to go to college virtually free with the HOPE Scholarship; however, they need to graduate from high school first. So one of our most ambitious goals, also one of our most exciting ones, is to increase the Atlanta Public School's high school graduation rate by 25 percent.

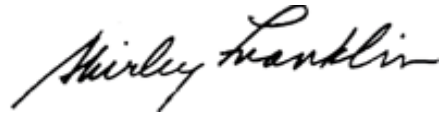
There are several projects already on the drawing board that support this plan, such as the BeltLine and Imagine Downtown. The BeltLine is a proposed economic development project that would enhance the quality of life for Atlantans by providing 22 miles of paths, parks and transit along a historic rail corridor that encircles Atlanta's urban core and connects more than 40 neighborhoods. This project will help us reach our goal of 1,900 acres of dedicated parks and green space in Atlanta by 2009. These kinds of projects will get people out of their cars and walking, increasing our health and our property values.

Downtown Atlanta is getting a face-lift and you will soon see the progress as the City continues to transform and unfold. The new Georgia Aquarium is scheduled to open in late 2005. When completed, it will be the largest aquarium in the United States. Downtown Atlanta will become vibrant again, neighborhoods will be lined with businesses and visitors, and residents alike as they enjoy shopping, restaurants and entertainment.

We are a compassionate city and must ensure that ALL city residents, no matter where they live, have access to well-paying jobs, a safe neighborhood, and nearby retail to meet their daily needs. The residents and businesses in our underserved areas are getting the needed special attention they deserve.

Atlanta is a great city that offers opportunity and hope for her promise to be realized. The ***New Century Economic Development Plan*** puts that opportunity and hope into action. Atlanta's ***promise*** is...Atlanta's ***future***.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley Franklin". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Shirley" and "Franklin" being capitalized and prominent.

Shirley Franklin